

(WASHINGTON, DC) - U.S. Representative Chet Edwards today announced that the Waco Fire Department has been awarded a \$136,579 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG). The Bellmead Fire Department also received a \$44,757 AFG grant. The federal grant enables local fire departments to use the funds for training, equipment, and health and safety modifications to fire stations and facilities.

Congressman Edwards said, *"I am thrilled that the dedicated firefighters at the College Station Fire Department will receive this important funding. This will enhance the ability of our local firefighters to upgrade important equipment, prevent fires, and protect the community."*

John D. Johnston of the Waco Fire Department said, *"The second leading cause of deaths to firefighter across our country is collisions in fire apparatuses. Our intent with this money is to purchase a driving simulator. This simulator will have the feel of a real fire truck cab. The simulator will allow a firefighter to drive in all kinds of weather, on all kinds of roads in different traffic settings at day or night. Research has proven that individuals who have had simulator training are less likely to have collisions. The military and pilots use simulators for training. This equipment will prevent injury and/or deaths to firefighters and civilians. We are very excited about receiving the funds for this project."*

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP) in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). The AFGP program assists rural, urban and suburban fire departments throughout the United States by improving effectiveness of firefighting operations, firefighter health and safety programs, and fire prevention programs.

Edwards is a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee.

-30-